MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes X

Property Name: Colony Theatre	Inventory Number:	BA-3202
Address: 8123 Harford Road (MD 147)	Historic district:	yes X no
City: Parkville Zip Code: 21234	County: Baltimo	re County
USGS Quadrangle(s): Towson		
Property Owner: Parkville Memorial Post No. 9083 Veterans of Foreign Wars	Tax Account ID Number:	1403049075
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): Tax Map Number	ber:81	_
Project: MD-147 Parkville Streetscape Project Agence	ey: SHA	
Agency Prepared By: EHT Traceries, Inc.		
Preparer's Name: Patricia Altman	Date Prepared: 5	/1/2006
Documentation is presented in:		
Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: X Eligibility recommended	Eligibili	ity not recommended
Criteria: X A B X C D Considerations: A	BCD	EFG
Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource	ce to a NR district/property:	
Name of the District/Property:		
Inventory Number: Eligible:ye	es Listed:	yes
Site visit by MHT Staff yesX no Name:		Date:
Description of Property and Justification: (Please attach map and photo)		
Constructed in 1949, the Colony Theatre was designed by the prominent Baltimor style, a popular style for motion picture theatres in the 1930s and 1940s. Charact K. Headley Jr. as typical of the Moderne style are evident in the Colony: "The use became common during the thirties and forties. Marquees changed from square to Zink, in his later work, was known for designing theatres in this style. Located or Parkville in Baltimore County, the theatre was built for the leading Baltimore most the rapid population growth and suburbanization that occurred in the area following 13, 1949 with a showing of "Abbott and Costello Meet the Killer."[2]	eristics described by movie e of buff facing bricks and g o triangular and signs becan the main transit route of H vie circuit F.H. Durkee Ente ng World War II. The thea	theatre expert Robert glazed tile fronts ne horizontal."[1] larford Road in erprises in response to
Associated with the rapid population growth and suburbanization trend in Parkvil World War II, the Colony Theatre qualifies for eligibility under Criterion A. The group of persons of outstanding importance to the community, state, or nation. The Criterion B. The 1949 Colony Theatre embodies distinctive characteristics of a North represents the work of the prominent Baltimore theatre architect John J. Zink. Warmarquee, and restrained geometric details, the building illustrates the key features	property is not associated wherefore, the property is not Moderne-style theatre of the ith its buff-colored brick fag	with any person or t eligible under 1930s and 1940s and cade, triangular
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW		
Eligibility recommended X Eligibility not recommended	_	
Criteria:AB \(\subseteq C \)D Considerations:A	BCD	_EFG
MHT Comments:		
1	1.7	
Devision Office of Processing Sources	7/11/06	
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	Date	
Reviewer, National Register Program	Date	

Page 2

recognized late in his career. Expressed in more simplified manner than previously employed for large downtown theatres, however, the design is entirely appropriate for a modest, suburban theatre built to serve the rapidly growing post-war population of the Parkville area. The exterior of the theatre remains remarkably intact, including retaining its original marquee and ticket booth. Therefore, the Colony Theatre qualifies for eligibility under Criterion C. The property was not evaluated under Criterion D.

The theatre is a two-story flat-roof structure, rectangular in plan, with a concrete foundation and brick exterior walls. Fronting northwest, the three-bay, symmetrical façade is buff-colored brick laid in six-course American bond with raised brown-brick geometric decoration. The slightly recessed central bay contains the main entrance set off with Vitrolite cladding. To the right of the entrance is a three-sided metal ticket booth with canted sides. A triangular metal marquee extends from the building. Flanking the entry, in each side bay are two aluminum-frame poster boxes at the first story. Glass block-filled window openings framed with brown-brick decoration pierce the second story. The six-bay side elevations and the rear (southeast) elevation are red brick laid in six-course American bond with square buttresses and corbelling along the roofline. The concrete foundation is gradually exposed as the site slopes down to the rear of the building.

John J. Zink (1886-1952) was a native Baltimore architect who designed numerous movie houses in Baltimore, including the Bridge, Patterson, Edgewood, Ambassador, Senator, and Colony theatres. He was considered a top "Moderne" architect at a time when many architects were designing in elaborate, emotional styles. Employing simple designs, Zink's attentions were directed toward technical aspects of theatre architecture, such as clear views for all movie-goers and ideal acoustics. Often having his designs published in theatre trade catalogues, Zink typically incorporated such amenities as nurseries, lounges, and smoking rooms in his movie house plans. He was responsible for the design of over 200 theatres in Baltimore and Washington, D.C., as well as other parts of the United States.

F.H. Durkee Enterprises was one of Baltimore's earliest and largest movie circuits. It was founded circa 1909 by Frank H. Durkee (1888-1955). He subsequently formed a partnership with Charles E. Nolte and C.W. Pacy and by 1921 they controlled about 11 theatres. They continued to add theatres in the 1920s and 1930s and by 1945 controlled at least 17 Baltimore theatres. The firm built its twenty-first theatre, the Liberty II, in 1971. Unlike many large circuits, Durkee owned most of its theatres.[3]

The Colony was constructed at the close of the era when big downtown movie palaces dominated. Movie attendance had declined after World War II, particularly in the large downtown houses. The Colony was designed as a neighborhood theater for a fast-growing suburban area at a time when many Baltimore-area theaters were closing.[4] Durkee was reported to have said at the opening ceremonies that "his ambition was to give residents of the community a theater of which they could justly be proud."[5] The Colony was one of the first movie theaters to provide a large parking lot for its patrons, a recognition of the importance of the automobile in suburban commerce.

The Colony was a popular local source of entertainment in the 1950s for the Parkville community. The nearest movie theater to it was the Arcade, several miles south on Harford Road at Hamilton Avenue. That was also a Durkee theater and the location of the Durkee Enterprises headquarters. The Colony was in business 25 years, and closed on September 2, 1974.

The theater building had been purchased on August 16, 1974, by The Northfield-Loch Raven Memorial Post 9083, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., predecessor post to the Parkville Memorial Post 9083. The Post, which paid \$250,000 for the theater, engaged architect Albert K. Broughton to alter the building. Alterations included building a level floor to replace the sloping floor of the theater and inserting a second floor. The principal exterior alteration was replacement of the original oak doors with glass and metal ones (Baltimore County building permit #61829). Blair & Sons was the builder.[6]

The building in the rear, known as the Butler Building and used as a lounge with restaurant and bar, was constructed in 1989.

MARYLA	ND HISTO	ORICAL	TRUST	REVI	EW					0.8		
Eligibility	recommen	ded	_	Eli	gibility not recomme	nded						
Criteria:	A	В	c	D	Considerations:	A	В	C	D	E	F	G
MHT Com	ments:											
1												
_	Review	er, Offic	e of Pres	servatio	on Services			Date			-	
	Revie	ewer, Na	tional Re	egister	Program			Date				

NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

BA-3202

Colony Theatre

Page 3

Parkville Memorial Post 9083 traces its history back to the Campbell-Porter Post 5629, founded in 1946. Following several consolidations, it was incorporated as the Parkville Memorial Post 9083, VFW, Inc. on October 19, 1976.

- [1] Robert K Headley Jr., Exit: A History of Movies in Baltimore (University Park, Maryland, Robert K Headley Jr. 1974), 31.
- [2] Ibid, 61.
- [3] Ibid, 14-15.
- [4] Ibid, 30, 33.
- [5] Robert K. Headley Jr., Motion Picture Exhibition in Baltimore (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2006), 243.
- [6] Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., Parkville Memorial Post No. 9083, "Frequently Asked Questions." VFW Parkville Memorial Post No. 9083, 8123 Harford Road, Baltimore, Maryland and telephone interview with David Kinnear, Post Quartermaster, 26 April 2006.

Eligibility recommended	Elig	ibility not recommen	ded						
Criteria:AB MHT Comments:	CD	Considerations:	A	В	_c	D .	E	F	G
Reviewer, Office	ce of Preservation	n Services	-		Date			_	

CAPSULE SUMMARY
BA-3202
Colony Theatre
8123 Harford Road
Parkville, Baltimore County
1949
Private

Constructed in 1949, the Colony Theatre embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Modernestyle, including a buff-brick façade, geometric detailing, and triangular marquee, and is representative of the later work of the prominent Baltimore theatre architect John J. Zink. As part of the local movie circuit F.H. Durkee Enterprises, it was built as a modest suburban theatre in response to the rapidly growing population of the Parkville area after World War II. Since the building closed as a theatre in 1974, it has been owned and operated as a post by the VFW Post 9083, who constructed on the site a one-story, flat-roof, metal-clad rectangular building to the southeast of the theatre.

The theatre is a two-story flat-roof structure, rectangular in plan, with a concrete foundation and brick exterior walls. Fronting northwest, the three-bay, symmetrical façade is buff-colored brick laid in six-course American bond with raised brown-brick geometric decoration. The slightly recessed central bay contains the main entrance set off with Vitrolite cladding. To the right of the entrance is a three-sided metal ticket booth with canted sides. A triangular metal marquee extends from the building. Flanking the entry, in each side bay are two aluminum-frame poster boxes at the first story. Glass block-filled window openings framed with brown-brick decoration pierce the second story. The six-bay side elevations and the rear (southeast) elevation are red brick laid in six-course American bond with square buttresses and corbelling along the roofline. The concrete foundation is gradually exposed as the site slopes down to the rear of the building.

Inventory No. BA-3202

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

historic	Colony Theatre	(preferred)									
other	VFW Post No.	9083 (current)	()								
2. Location											
street and number	8123 Harford R	oad) <u>-</u>	_ not f	or publ	ication
city, town	Parkville							-	vicin	ity	
county	Baltimore Coun	ty									
3. Owner of	Property	(give nam	es and mailing	g address	ses of all	owners)				
name	Parkville Memo	orial Post No.	9083 Veterans	of Forei	gn Wars	;					
street and number	8123 Harford R	oad					teleph	one			
city, town	Baltimore			state	Maryl	and	zip co	de	21234		
4. Location	of Legal D	escripti	on								
courthouse, registr	y of deeds, etc.	Baltimore Cou	nty Courthous	se		liber	5471	folio	575		
city, town 5. Primary L	Towson	Additio	tax map 81	tax	parcel	307	5471	102-102-202	575 D numbe	er 14	0304975
Contri Contri Deterri Recor Histori	Towson Cocation of a second of the second o	Additional Regard Local Historial Regards the National Regards to Research	tax map 81 onal Data gister District c District egister/Maryla Register/Mary	tax and Regis	iter	10452630	5471	102-102-202		er 14	0304975
city, town 5. Primary L Contri Contri Deterr Recor Histor	Towson Cocation of a second of the second o	Additional Regard Local Historial Regards the National Regards to Research	tax map 81 onal Data gister District c District egister/Maryla Register/Mary Report at MH	tax and Regis	iter	10452630	50 00/02	tax II			0304975

ventory No. BA-3202

X excellent	deteriorated
annd	ruins

__ good ___ ruins __ fair ___ altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This former neighborhood Moderne-style movie theatre is a two-story flat-roof structure, rectangular in plan, with a concrete foundation and brick exterior walls. The theatre fronts northwest on a sloping site that also includes a one-story non-contributing building to the southeast of the theatre, a memorial to the west, a billboard to the east, a paved driveway and parking lot to the west and south, and grassy areas along the edges of the site.

The two-story, three-bay, symmetrical façade is buff-colored brick laid in six-course American bond with raised brown-brick geometric decoration. The façade returns one bay onto each of the side elevations. A parapet continues the façade and returns the level of the flat roof. The central bay of the façade is slightly recessed and has a higher parapet. It contains the main building entrance at street level, two double-leaf metal-frame glass doors with sidelights and infilled transoms, set off with Vitrolite cladding. To the right of the entrance is a three-sided metal ticket booth with canted sides and Vitrolite counter. Above the entrance, a triangular metal marquee extends from the building face nearly the full width of the public sidewalk. Flanking the entry, in each side bay are two aluminum-frame poster boxes at the first story. Glass block-filled window openings framed with brown-brick decoration pierce the second story.

With the exception of the façade return in the first bay, the six-bay side elevations are red brick laid in six-course American bond with square buttresses and corbelling along the roofline. The concrete foundation is gradually exposed as the site slopes down to the rear of the building and steps down articulating the slope of the auditorium floor on the interior of the building. On the west elevation, there is a single-leaf metal egress door in the first bay from the façade. On the east elevation, there is a one-story, half hipped-roof projection in the first bay and an enclosed, external straight-flight stair that extends from the second story to grade. The projection has white brick cladding and asphalt shingle roofing. The stair enclosure has cement block walls, partially covered with plywood panels, slider windows at the second story on the northeast and southeast elevations and a fixed single light window at the landing on the southeast elevation, a metal single-leaf egress door on the southeast elevation, and a corrugated metal roof. The bottom of the stair enclosure has white brick cladding and a shed roof.

The rear (southeast) elevation is red brick laid in six-course American bond with exposed concrete foundation. A series of corrugated metal roofs extends the width of the building, covering various concrete steps and patios and a satellite dish enclosed in chain-link fence.

Located to the southeast of the theatre is a one-story, flat-roof, metal-clad rectangular building. On the southwest elevation of this building, the vertical metal cladding is above a water table of white brick laid in running bond, and a metal-clad parapet projects from the face of the building. A one-story flat roof entrance vestibule, with stucco walls, metal-clad roof, and double-leaf glass and metal door, projects from the north corner of the southwest elevation. The southeast elevation has two single-leaf flush metal doors.

In the west corner of the site, to the west of the theatre, is a low U-shaped memorial of buff brick with canted sides and an integrated bench. In the north corner of the site is a free standing metal billboard. Along the southwest elevation of the theatre is a paved driveway and parking. To the rear of the theatre is a large parking lot behind which is a grassy area with mature trees and shrubs. The site is partially bounded to the southwest and northeast by chain link fences and a concrete retaining wall from the adjacent property.

8. Signification	ance			Inventory No. BA-3202
Period	Areas of Significance	Check and j	ustify below	
1600-1699 1700-1799 1800-1899 1900-1999 2000-	agriculture archeology X architecture art commerce communications X community planning conservation	 economics education engineering x entertainment/ recreation ethnic heritage exploration/ settlement 	health/medicine industry invention landscape architecto law literature maritime history military	performing arts philosophy politics/government ure religion science social history transportation other:
Specific dates	1949		Architect/Builder Jo	ohn J. Zink, (1886-1952)
Construction da	ites 1949, 1989			
Evaluation for:	National Register	XN	Maryland Register	not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

Constructed in 1949, the Colony Theatre was designed by the prominent Baltimore theatre architect John J. Zink in the Moderne style, a popular style for motion picture theatres in the 1930s and 1940s. Characteristics described by movie theatre expert Robert K Headley Jr. as typical of the Moderne style are evident in the Colony: "The use of buff facing bricks and glazed tile fronts became common during the thirties and forties. Marquees changed from square to triangular and signs became horizontal." Zink, in his later work, was known for designing theatres in this style. Located on the main transit route of Harford Road in Parkville in Baltimore County, the theatre was built for the leading Baltimore movie circuit F.H. Durkee Enterprises in response to the rapid population growth and suburbanization that occurred in the area following World War II. The theatre opened on October 13, 1949 with a showing of "Abbott and Costello Meet the Killer."

Associated with the rapid population growth and suburbanization trend in Parkville, Baltimore County, in the decades following World War II, the Colony Theatre qualifies for eligibility under Criterion A. The property is not associated with any person or group of persons of outstanding importance to the community, state, or nation. Therefore, the property is not eligible under Criterion B. The 1949 Colony Theatre embodies distinctive characteristics of a Moderne-style theatre of the 1930s and 1940s and represents the work of the prominent Baltimore theatre architect John J. Zink. With its buff-colored brick façade, triangular marquee, and restrained geometric details, the building illustrates the key features of the popular Moderne style for which Zink was recognized late in his career. Expressed in more simplified manner than previously employed for large downtown theatres, however, the design is entirely appropriate for a modest, suburban theatre built to serve the rapidly growing post-war population of the Parkville area. The exterior of the theatre remains remarkably intact, including retaining its original marquee and ticket booth. Therefore, the Colony Theatre qualifies for eligibility under Criterion C. The property was not evaluated under Criterion D.

John J. Zink (1886-1952) was a native Baltimore architect who designed numerous movie houses in Baltimore, including the Bridge Patterson, Edgewood, Ambassador, Senator, and Colony theatres. He was considered a top "Moderne" architect at a time when many architects were designing in elaborate, emotional styles. Employing simple designs, Zink's attentions were directed toward technical aspects of theatre architecture, such as clear views for all movie-goers and ideal acoustics. Often having his designs published in theatre trade catalogues, Zink typically incorporated such amenities as nurseries, lounges, and smoking rooms in his movie house plans. He was responsible for the design of over 200 theatres in Baltimore and Washington, D.C., as well as other parts of the United States.

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¹ Robert K Headley Jr., Exit: A History of Movies in Baltimore (University Park, Maryland, Robert K Headley Jr. 1974), 31.

² Ibid, 61.

Inventory No. BA-3202

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Name Colony Theatre
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

theatres. They continued to add theatres in the 1920s and 1930s and by 1945 controlled at least 17 Baltimore theatres. The firm built its twenty-first theatre, the Liberty II, in 1971. Unlike many large circuits, Durkee owned most of its theatres.³

The Colony was constructed at the close of the era when big downtown movie palaces dominated. Movie attendance had declined after World War II, particularly in the large downtown houses. The Colony was designed as a neighborhood theater for a fast-growing suburban area at a time when many Baltimore-area theaters were closing.⁴ Durkee was reported to have said at the opening ceremonies that "his ambition was to give residents of the community a theater of which they could justly be proud." The Colony was one of the first movie theaters to provide a large parking lot for its patrons, a recognition of the importance of the automobile in suburban commerce.

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³ Ibid, 14-15.

⁴ *Ibid*, 30, 33.

⁵ Robert K. Headley Jr., *Motion Picture Exhibition in Baltimore* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2006), 243. ⁶ Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., Parkville Memorial Post No. 9083, "Frequently Asked Questions." VFW Parkville Memorial Post No. 9083, 8123 Harford Road, Baltimore, Maryland and telephone interview with David Kinnear, Post Quartermaster, 26 April 2006.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. BA-3202

Headley Jr., Robert K. Exit: A History of Movies in Baltimore. University Park, Maryland, Robert K Headley Jr. 1974.

Headley Jr., Robert K. Motion Picture Exhibition in Baltimore. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2006.

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., Parkville Memorial Post No. 9083, "Frequently Asked Questions." VFW Parkville Memorial Post No. 9083, 8123 Harford Road, Baltimore, Maryland and telephone interview with David Kinnear, Post Quartermaster, 26 April 2006.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property Acreage of historical setting	2.98 acres	_	
Quadrangle name	Towson	Quadrangle scale:	1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The recommended National Register boundary for the Colony Theatre is tax parcel 307, illustrated on tax map 81, with which the building has historically been associated.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Patricia Altman, Architectural Historian, and Andrea Schoenfeld, Historian				
organization	EHT Traceries, Inc.	date	May 2, 2006		
street & number	1121 Fifth Street, NW	telephone	202.393.1199		
city or town	Washington	state	DC		

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

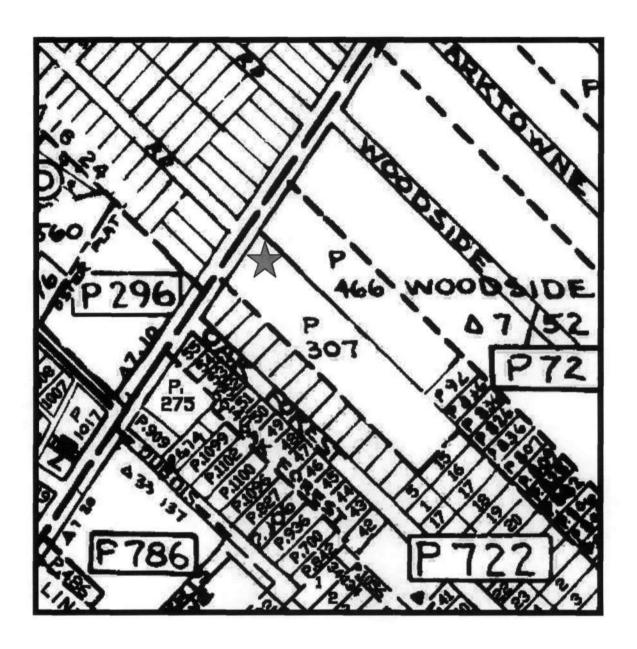
return to:

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Department of Planning 100 Community Place Crownsville, MD 21032-2023 410-514-7600

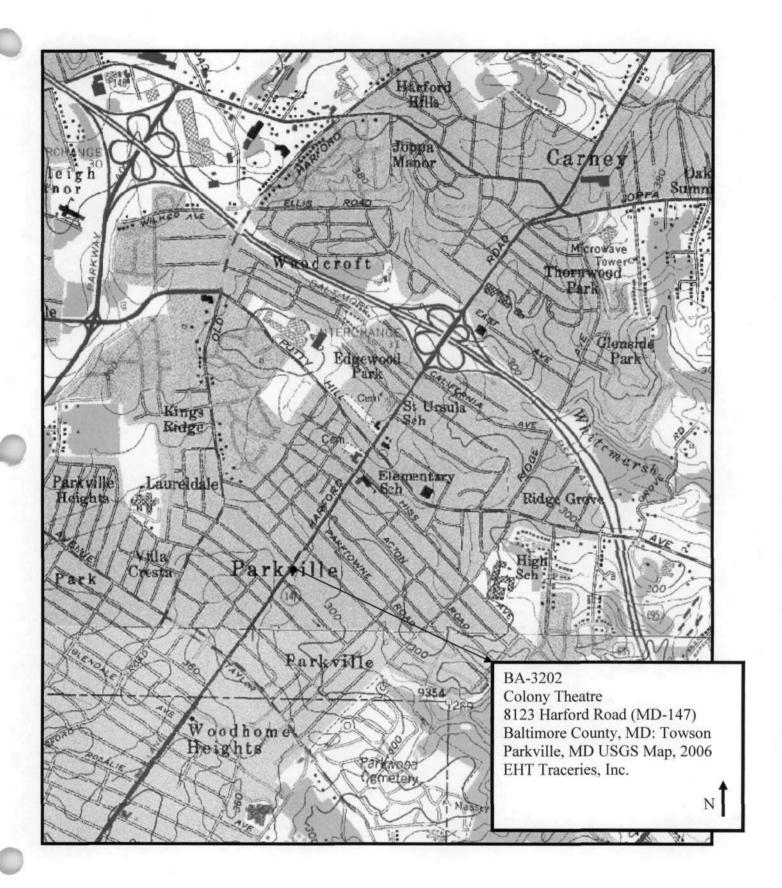
RESOURCE SLETCH
MAP
Ny

O FLAGFOLE PARKING FLAT FLAT FLAT Pretab Sheds BUTLER BUILDING CONC BA-3202 COLONY THEATER PARKVILLE, MD BALTIMORE COUNTY NOT DRAWN TO SCALE

HARFORD ROAD



BA-3202
Colony Theatre
8123 Harford Road (MD 147)
Baltimore County, MD: Towson
Parkville, Tax Parcel Map
Map 81, Parcel 307
EHT Traceries, Inc. 2006





BA-3202 (10FG)
COLONY THEATRE
8123 HARFORD ROAD
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND
EHT TRACERIES
APRIL 2000
MD SHPO
WEST ELEVATION, LOOKING EAST



BA-3202 (20FG)

COLONY THEATRE

8123 HARFORD ROAD

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

EHT TRACERIES

APRIL 2006

MD SHPO

NORTH ELEVATION, LOOKING SOUTH



BA-3202 (3 OF G)

COLONY THEATRE

8123 HARFORD ROAD

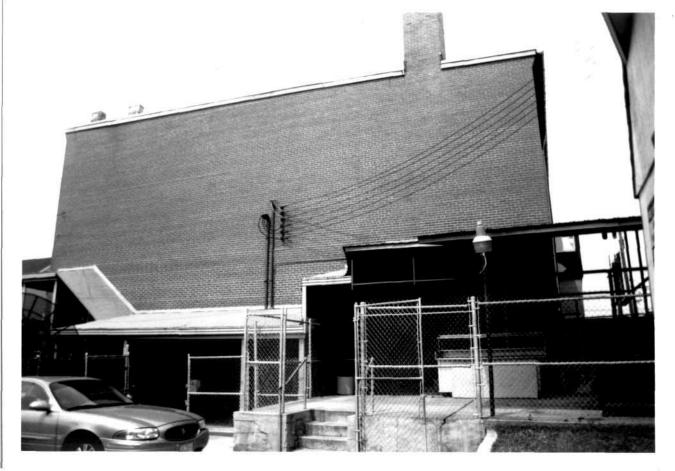
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

EHT TRACERIES

APRIL 2006

MD SHPO

SOUTH ELEVATION, LOOKING NORTH



BA-3202 (4 of 6)

COLONY THEATRE

8123 HARFORD ROAD

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

EHT TRACERIES

APRIL 2006

MD SHPO

SOUTHEAST ELEVATION, LOOKING NORTHWEST



BA-3202 (5 OF G)

COLONY THEATRE

8123 HARFORD ROAD

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

EHT TRACERIES

APRIL 2006

MD SHPO

NORTHEAST ELEVATION, LOOKING NORTHWEST



BA-3202 (60F6) COLONY THEATRE 8123 HARFORD ROAD BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND EHT TRACERIES APRIL 2006 MD SHPO SOUTH ELEVATION OF REAR BUILDING,

LOOKING MORTH